

Idaho's Nature Backpack Program Grant

*Watchable Wildlife Program Partners, Idaho Department of Fish & Game,
and the Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation*



Children are spending less time outdoors today. Research shows that they are suffering negative effects of this trend such as decreased levels of physical, mental, and emotional health. Outdoor recreation can help change this trend. Time spent outdoors is an essential component of our well-being and has the ability to improve our health and build the human spirit. In addition, our behavior toward the outdoors and wildlife is linked to one's interaction with nature.

The Watchable Wildlife Program, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and the Idaho Foundation for Fish and Wildlife encourage outdoor play and recreation through participation efforts such as those led by the national Children and Nature Network and our statewide "Be Outside, Idaho" initiative.

Supporters of these efforts have established the "Idaho Nature Backpack Program." This exciting program will provide resources and ideas to encourage outdoor exploration and physical activity by preschool-age children in childcare facilities or preschools.

In 2013, at least 50 grants will be awarded to successful applicants in **Ada, Blaine, Boise, Camas, Canyon, Cassia, Elmore, Gem, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, Owyhee, Payette, and Twin Falls Counties.**

Backpack Contents

Each Idaho Nature Backpack will contain items designed to encourage daily outdoor exploration and physical activity in any location. These packs can be used by children on field trips, local park outings, neighborhood walks, or indoors. Each backpack is valued at approximately \$250 and contains numerous items that can be used in groups, such as:

- Backpack
- Binoculars
- Insect nets
- Leaf and animal track rubbing plates
- Magnifying glasses
- Bug boxes
- Trading cards- fish, animal, endangered species
- Tongs and tweezers
- Storybooks
- Guidebooks
- Music CD
- ProjectWild DVD
- Education-based activity ideas for different seasons of the year
- Contents of inventory/resource list

(This is a preliminary list and will change depending upon applicants suggestions. Backpack contents may vary based on specialized needs and number of children in the program).

Eligible Applicants and Terms of Grant Acceptance

A successful applicant will:

- Be a licensed year-round child care facility, a year-round home childcare provider or a preschool facility.
- Care primarily for pre-school age children (the targeted age level of materials in the backpacks).
- Be located in **Ada, Blaine, Boise, Camas, Canyon, Cassia, Elmore, Gem, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, Owyhee, Payette, and Twin Falls Counties.**
- Be licensed in Idaho through 2013 (childcare providers only).
- Plan to use the backpack items frequently to increase or enhance time spent in nature.
- Complement backpack use with outdoor activities and lessons.
- Agree to complete a short survey after backpack is awarded.
- Provide feedback on materials and information for future grants.

Grants will not be awarded to individual families or for single, specific activities (e.g., for use on a once-a-year field trip, lesson plan, or day camp).

Application Process and Timeline

Please complete the following application form. Grant applications must be postmarked or submitted to the office no later than 5 p.m. Mountain Time on June 7, 2013.

Dates to remember:

June 7, 2013- Backpack grant due

July 12, 2013- Notification of grant acceptance or rejection

August 30, 2013- Backpacks awarded

December, 2013- Final surveys due

- Notification of grant acceptance or rejection will be given by July 12, 2013.
- Nature backpacks will be awarded to successful applicants before August 30. Staff from the Watchable Wildlife Program and their Partners, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, and other partners will personally deliver the backpacks where possible.
- Final surveys on the “Idaho Nature Backpack Program” will be required by Dec. 1, 2013.

Mail your completed application to:

Watchable Wildlife Program
Attn: Deniz Aygen, Program Leader
Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game
PO Box 25, 600 S. Walnut St.
Boise, ID 83707

Questions:

Deniz Aygen at deniz.aygen@idfg.idaho.gov or 208/287-2750

Idaho Nature Backpack Program Grant Application

Grant Year: S2013

Watchable Wildlife Program, Idaho Department of Fish & Game, and the Idaho Foundation for Fish & Wildlife

Please complete the following information and short survey. Attach additional sheets in needed.

Child Care Provider _____

Provider is: ☐ Registered year-round Idaho daycare. License number _____

☐ Established preschool

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Size of Group _____ Age range _____

Do you service any children with disabilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, how many? _____

Disability _____ On the back, or in the "comments" section on page 4, please list items that would enhance these children's experiences.

By submitting this application, I affirm that I represent a registered, licensed year-round daycare or established preschool operating in Idaho.

Preparer/Contact Name _____ Position _____

This information is being requested to gather information to help select backpack contents. Grant decisions will not be made based on the answers to these questions.

On average, how often does your group go outside?

Use pleasant spring, summer, and fall days as a basis.

- ☐ Less than once per week
- ☐ 1-2 times per week
- ☐ 3-4 times per week
- ☐ Every day
- ☐ 2 or more times per day

When children go outside, on average how long are they there?

Use pleasant spring, summer, and fall days as a basis.

- ☐ Less than 15 minutes
- ☐ 15-29 minutes
- ☐ 30-44 minutes
- ☐ 45+ minutes

What are the top 3 activities you frequently do outside?

- ☐ Free play
- ☐ Recreational equipment-aided free play
- ☐ Educational materials/equipment aided free play
- ☐ Free play with opportunity-based teaching
- ☐ Structured lesson plans
- ☐ Organized physical activities

On average, how often does your group learn about the natural world, either outdoors or in a classroom setting?

- ☐ Less than once per week
- ☐ 1-2 times per week
- ☐ 3-4 times per week
- ☐ Every day
- ☐ 2 or more times a week

Please rank the following as they apply to your daycare/preschool.

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
I feel knowledgeable about nature and the outdoors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to come up with ideas for outdoor activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am aware of the area parks available to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I take the children often to area parks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If offered, I or my staff would participate in a several hour workshop to better utilize the nature backpacks. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Describe your **current outdoor play environment**, including how often, common locations, typical activities, free play or structured activities, and any barriers to getting outside more. (Use pleasant spring, summer, and fall days as your basis.)

How would the backpack increase or enhance your outdoor time?

Help us decide what to put in the backpacks! Based on your experience, can you suggest some outdoor exploration items and physical activity equipment that would work well for your group?

Do you have any additional comments or information about your program you'd like to include?

Applications must be postmarked by 5 p.m. MT on June 7, 2013.